NEXT GENERATION LEARNING CHALLENGES
Transforming education through technology

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Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC) seeks to dramatically improve college readiness and completion in the United States through the applied use of information technology, especially for the benefit of low-income young adults. The program provides investment capital, builds evidence, and fosters an active community of innovators and adopters in pursuit of this goal. We invite you to visit the NGLC web site for further information (http://nextgenlearning.org).

In particular, it is essential that you fully review the request-for-proposals (RFP) for the current grant competition (http://nextgenlearning.com/sites/site-1/assets/Final_RFP.1.pdf) before starting your pre-proposal submission to make sure you understand its focus and requirements. Please note that you do not need to complete your submission all in one setting. You may save it in draft mode until you are finished and then submit it when done. If you have any questions, please contact us at nglc@educause.edu .

Fields marked with an * are required before submission.

NGLC Wave 1 Pre-Proposal Application Form

Project Title: *
Both Together And Apart: Blended Learning at Cal State Fullerton

Project Short Title (25 characters):
Both Together And Apart

Principal Investigator Information:

Name: *
Genelle Belmas

Title: *
Associate Professor

Institutional/Organizational Affiliation: *
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Type:

Institutional/Organizational Tax Status *	Nonprofit, U.S.-based organization (includes U.S. public postsecondary institutii

If you selected "other," please specify:

For U.S.-based nonprofit entities, if you know the tax code designation under which your organization operates (e.g., 501(c)(3), 501(c)(_), U.S. Non-Exempt) , please provide it

Tax Code: 501(c)(3)

Co-Investigator Information:

Name: Dean Kazoleas

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Name: Paul Lester

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If you have additional co-investigators to list, please upload a Word or PDF document referencing your application and providing the requested information for each.

Attach: [Select Files] (maximum size 1MB)

Institutions Committed to Participate

Institution Name: California State University

City, State: Fullerton, CA

Type: non-taxable

Country of Operation: United States

Contact Name: Jerry Yu

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Institution Name:

City, State:

Type:

Country of Operation:

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Institution Name:

City, State:

Type:

Country of Operation:

Contact Name:

Contact Email:

If you have additional participating institutions to list, please upload a Word or PDF document referencing your application and providing the requested information for each.

Attach: Select Files   (maximum size 1MB)

Compliance with NGLC Terms and Conditions

Q1. [Please check each and every box to indicate your acceptance] On behalf of myself, my co-investigators, and the institutions that have committed to participate, I warrant that we have each read and understood the following and are committed to abide by their terms and conditions:

In the NGLC Wave 1 request for proposals (RFP) [http://bit.ly/nglc_rfp]:

- ☑ Application Instructions
- ☑ Selection Process
- ☑ Conditions of Funding
- ☑ Amount and Duration of Grants
- ☑ Reporting
- ☑ Appendix 1: Sample NGLC Grant Agreement Terms and Conditions
- ☑ NGLC Intellectual Property Policy [http://bit.ly/nglc_ipp]
- ☑ NGLC Conflict of Interest Policy [http://bit.ly/nglc_coi]

Challenge Areas

Q2. With which of the four NGLC challenge areas will your proposal engage? [Select all that apply]

- ☑ Blended Learning
- ☐ Learner Analytics
- ☑ Deeper Learning and Engagement
- ☐ Open Core Courseware

Q3. Which ONE of the four the intended NGLC student outcomes do you consider to be the primary focus of your proposal?

○ Blended Learning
○ Learner Analytics
○ Deeper Learning and Engagement
○ Open Core Courseware

Project Overview

Q4. Briefly describe your proposed project and how it relates to the intended NGLC student outcomes.
(completion, persistence, content mastery, mastery of deeper learning outcomes)

5,000 characters maximum

California State University, Fullerton (CSUF) is one of 23 campuses within the California State University system. Its mission, designated in the California Master Plan for higher education, is undergraduate education and graduate education through the master's degree. Its primary focus is instruction. The Communications Department (CSUF College of Communications) has an enrollment of approximately 2,800 undergraduates in five concentrations (advertising, entertainment studies, journalism, public relations, and photocommunications).

Keeping with the target learner population identified in the request for proposals, Cal State Fullerton has a diverse student population.
•   45% of new undergraduates come from community colleges (highest in California).
•   51% come from a household where neither parent graduated from college; 59% of students are women.
•   Most students are low to moderate income; 74% of undergraduates are employed.
•   42% of students in 2006-07 received financial aid.
•   Enrollment based on the fall 2010 student population census: American Indian 0.4%, Multiple Race Non-Hispanic 2.4%, Black 2.7%, International 4.7%, Unknown 7.2%, Asian/Pacific Islander 21.2%, Hispanic 30.2% and White 31.3%.
•   Diverse Issues in Higher Education ranks CSUF 6th in the nation for baccalaureate degrees to minorities.

The project is based on the success of several pilot blended core classes this semester. Currently, CSUF communications faculty members are experimenting with blended learning in two courses required for all majors: a media law course and a media history course. For example, the primary investigator's (PI) media law class meets every Monday and Wednesday, and only a few Fridays on which exams and quizzes are scheduled. The students know in advance the Fridays on which they will be expected to attend. The lectures are pre-recorded and posted on a website as Flash files to be viewed on a computer and in both video + audio and audio-only versions to be downloaded to a smart phone, CD or mp3 player. The PI solicited student suggestions for other elements they would like to see put online as part of this project; these suggestions included flashcards, review sessions, and practice quizzes. A survey revealed that the blended approach so far has been successful, as discussed below.

The proposed project has two phases. In the first phase, the PI and co-investigators will collaborate to create training and curricular development protocols by which faculty members in the Communications Department can learn both the technology and pedagogical approaches necessary to develop blended learning classes. In the second phase, in keeping with the NGLC's emphasis on adoption, several faculty members will be provided with research time for the purpose of developing curricular elements for their own blended classes using these resources. Through the project, the department anticipates at least tripling the number of courses and students served by blended classes.

If awarded, the grant would support several critical components: technical training, software/hardware purchase and support, and the creation of a cross-concentration collaboration to develop protocols and help other faculty

Scaling Potential

Q5. NGLC seeks proposals for solutions that have already been investigated in at least some meaningful way and shown to generate some relevant benefits. What is the current reach of the primary solution that you propose to scale? Be brief and numeric: numbers of students currently served, numbers of courses, numbers of institutions/campuses, etc.

500 characters maximum

> The current reach of the project is two courses (core communications courses required of all communications majors: media law and media history). There are three classes of students participating this semester, totaling nearly 400 students. Two faculty members are currently teaching these blended courses, and one of them is the PI on this project.

Q6. If your proposal is funded, by how much do you intend to increase the reach and dissemination of the solution? Again, be numeric, using the same measures as for your previous answer:

500 characters maximum

> Each of the five concentrations will be asked to identify at least two courses for which blended learning would be appropriate. The core courses will also be evaluated for 2-4 appropriate courses. This would result in approximately 12-14 blended courses taught by 5-7 different faculty members, with a range of 300-600 students per semester. When added to the current courses and enrollments, the result would be approximately 14-16 courses, 700-1,000 students, and 7-9 faculty members per semester.

Q7. Briefly, please discuss the immediate (i.e., within the term of the NGLC Wave 1 grant) and longer-term scaling potential of your proposed solution. What is the potential upside? What are the primary obstacles to be overcome or risks to be mitigated?

2,000 characters maximum

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Immediate benefits are improved academic performance and
higher student and faculty satisfaction with the class
experience. Additionally, exposing more students to this
model's benefits will lead to more scholarly exploration
and student innovation. We will focus heavily on scaling
and seeking student feedback to create and sustain a viable
model that increases learning objectives. From a practical
perspective, students and faculty will save on parking and
gas expenses as well as commute times (formidable
challenges in Southern California). Students will not miss
out on important class content because they must work to
support themselves.

Long-term potential benefits include increased
collaboration with Information Technology, Academic
Affairs, and the Faculty Development Center. Taking into
consideration the over 460,000 students the CSU system
educates, CSUF could serve as an instigator for system-wide
growth and collaboration with future funding.

The primary obstacles for faculty can be categorized into
two concerns: fear of or actual difficulty with technology,
and increased workload, both up-front and throughout a
blended course. Students in the PI's survey correctly
pointed out that faculty should not think it is less work
to implement a course like this; a professor cannot
just "set it and forget it." Organization is critical to
the success of the approach, and that means matching course
objectives to the best method of delivery. Thus, the first
phase of the project will include a pedagogical discussion
of the best ways to incorporate blended learning. The PI
and co-investigators have many combined years of
traditional and online teaching experience. The blended
class has the potential to combine the best elements of the
online class (e.g., flexibility, option for repetition)
with the best of traditional settings (e.g., student
interaction, teamwork, time with the professor). Training
faculty members to recognize this will be vital.
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NGLC Objectives

Q8. Which of the following descriptions best fits your proposal?

○ Our proposal targets exclusively young adult learners under the age of 26 (i.e., any other learners will only be incidental beneficiaries).

◉ Our proposal targets primarily young adult learners under the age of 26 (i.e., such learners will be a majority of the population served).

○ Our proposal targets a variety of students, including at least some young adult learners under the age of 26.

○ None of the above.

Q9. Please check 'Yes' if your proposed solution will target high-enrollment, low-success developmental and/or general education courses—core, so-called "gatekeeper" courses—or similar courses in high-demand occupational programs such as business, criminal justice, information technology, and/or nursing and allied health.

◉ Yes
○ No

Q10. If you checked 'Yes' in the last question, list the course(s) you will target.

300 characters maximum

> We will initially target
> three large-enrollment core
> courses that all 2,800
> Communications majors must
> take: introduction to mass
> media, media law and media
> history. Two of the three
> (law and history) are
> difficult and may delay or
> prevent students from
> graduating, as they are

Q11. Briefly discuss the outcomes you anticipate achieving by the end of the grant, and how they align with the NGLC outcomes of interest: scaling outcomes; student outcomes (completion, persistence, content mastery, mastery of learning outcomes); and cost-effectiveness outcomes. If your project receives NGLC funding, what would be the maximum (realistic, not theoretical) level of success you would expect to accomplish with NGLC funds? What would be your minimum expectations for success? What would be your most likely level of success? Please bear in mind that, if your application is selected, your answers here may be used to inform your project's eventual evaluation.

2,000 characters maximum

> If this project is implemented, we expect increased
> student/faculty participation in blended courses, resulting
> in higher student satisfaction, course completion and
> possibly higher graduation rates. Additionally, we hope
> that students will retain the content longer, having spent
> more time with it. Cost savings will come not only from
> transportation costs but also in classroom usage: scarce,
> costly computer lab space can be double-booked with careful
> blended-class scheduling.
>
> Realistically, because the department has tried this
> approach in so few courses, there are still issues to be
> addressed. The approach works well for lecture-based
> courses that rely on memorization to support critical
> thinking, but there is no evidence yet to suggest how it
> will work with writing and editing classes, for example, or
> those that require significant faculty-student interaction.
> However, given strong positive student response, there
> seems to be no reason not to try it with a variety of
> classes. The students are ready. With encouragement and
> training, the faculty can be ready, too. By the end of the
> grant period, we believe that three times as many students
> will have been exposed to a blended course.
>
> At minimum, the investigators will pilot training materials
> with select faculty who teach easily adaptable courses
> (e.g., lecture-based). One blended class per concentration
> plus one additional core course is the minimum the
> investigators hope to achieve. However, informal responses
> from faculty on hearing about this project suggest that the
> reach could be much farther.
>
> The training materials should be sufficient for faculty to
> design a blended course and then create their own content
> with the help of trainers and technical personnel. It is
> reasonable to predict, given the pilot results, that
> student grades in blended classes will rise half a letter
> grade or more, and in three years they will recall material
> from blended courses better than from online or traditional
> courses.

Q12. Briefly discuss how your proposed plans, procedures, and activities align with the objectives and criteria detailed in the "Core Values and Criteria" and "Challenge Areas" sections of the NGLC Wave 1 RFP (i.e., both general objectives criteria and those specific to the challenge area to which you are applying). Address explicitly any objectives or criteria to which you cannot or will not conform, or that you believe do not apply.

2,000 characters maximum

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Because of the effort of faculty members in consultation
with the Dean's Office, we expect an encouraging
environment to adapt this technique to various classes. The
program's initial success and visibility will enable it to
reach faculty across campus, multiplying its adoption.
Future opportunities include taking our approach on the
road to work collaboratively with faculty across the CSU
system to impact thousands of students.

Our initial focus on lecture-based courses makes it very
easy for other organizations to adopt our model. Depending
on the organization's structure and goals, some
personalization may be required; however, our goal is to
provide a framework enhanced by the creativity of
additional faculty and students. Faculty members must be
able to customize classes to their strengths and those of
their students.

Two of the largest threats to sustainability are funding
and faculty champions. If we receive funding, our college
will be able to solicit other stakeholders who have
interest in new pedagogical methods. We strongly believe
that exploring blended learning is a major need at our
university. With additional external support, consistent
faculty advocacy, and integration across campus, we believe
this effort will sustain.

Our proposal, although focused on blended learning, will
have impacts within learner analytics and deeper learning
and engagement. Student access to online resources can be
tracked. The investigators will work with Informational
Technology staff to gather data and use it to determine
areas for improvement. There is also the potential for
deeper engagement via virtual environments; one
investigator has used the virtual world Second Life for
online courses, and the PI plans to teach a blended course
on virtual communities using the online game World of
Warcraft. Students have already reported more time spent
with material in the pilot class through downloadable
content. We do not plan to create open-source software.
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Evidentiary Support

Q13. In order to help us to evaluate your proposal fairly, please select the letter corresponding to the phrase below that best describes your primary proposed solution:

○ A demonstrably effective learning solution, already widely applied and tested in the domain in which you intend to apply it, and ready for scaling to the next level.

◉ A learning solution showing substantial promise in the domain in which you intend to apply it, but requiring both additional evaluation and scaling.

○ A solution having shown potential in an area outside of postsecondary learning (or outside of the particular aspect of postsecondary learning in which we intend to apply it), which will require some adaptation to the domain in

which you intend to work, as well as evaluation and scaling.
○ None of the above.

Q14. What evidence do you have—direct or indirect, formal or informal—that your solution has the potential to achieve the transformative outcomes sought by NGLC? What evidence, if any, is still lacking, and how would you propose to acquire it in the process of scaling your solution using NGLC funds?

2,000 characters maximum

The students in the PI's current classes expressed high satisfaction with the blended class experience. Over 75% of more than 200 student respondents said that this was their first hybrid course, compared to nearly 70% who had taken an online-only class. A significant majority - 92% - said that they would take another hybrid course.

Students reported spending significant amounts of time outside the classroom with the online course content. Almost 60% said that they listened to the Flash files three or more hours a week, compared with 52.6% who spent the same amount of the time with class notes and 15% who spent that same amount of time reading the textbook (in fact, nearly 40% admitted they never read the book!). They discussed a variety of ways in which they used the online content, from listening to it on their laptops while eating dinner or doing dishes, to burning the materials on CDs to listen to in their cars while commuting, to downloading it to their mp3 players or smart phones to use while walking across campus or between classes. Students liked being able to review content whenever they wanted, saying that they used the online materials both before the class meeting in which they were discussed and afterwards. Another common theme was their happiness in not having to drive in most Fridays.

The semester is not yet over, so final grades have not yet been tabulated, but a comparison of this class to previous non-blended sections shows little difference in the range of grades. It remains to be seen whether course grades will be higher as a result of the change in pedagogy.

Overall, the preliminary results of the pilot suggest that students are ready for this kind of learning. Having the opportunity to provide the experience to more students in more courses would increase the department's ability to determine what classes and approaches work best in the blended style.

"Adoption, not Reinvention"

Q15. As noted in the NGLC Wave 1 RFP, a primary objective of this wave of funding is the elimination of redundancy and unnecessary reinvention through the wide-scale adoption of proven solutions. Briefly, discuss how your proposed solution and scaling plan will leverage existing resources—created by you and/or others—to avoid duplicating previous efforts and to break the grip of "not invented here." What interoperability standards or protocols will you observe, if any? How will you overcome formal and informal resistance to "outside" innovation in your target institution(s)? How will you make it easier for others to adopt, in turn, the solution(s) that you deliver?

2,000 characters maximum

The whole point of this project is to increase the use of
blended learning techniques to reach more students. Our two
phase approach of evaluating pedagogical approaches coupled
with application and monitoring of the method will result
in large-scale adaptability. Having faculty members teach
other faculty members how to accomplish a shared goal is
key to the success of this project. Members of the
department teach the same students in the same facilities
and face the same challenges. The PI and co-investigators
all have experience teaching online or blended classes, and
in some cases, both. They are the best-equipped faculty
members to develop training materials for their colleagues.
Our two-phase approach of theory coupled with practice will
result in large-scale adaptability.

The investigators will use an off-the-shelf software
package like Camtasia or iSpring to create the project
materials. There will be two kinds of faculty training:
first, how to approach teaching a blended class from a
pedagogical perspective; and second, how to create online
content using off-the-shelf packages. There are no plans to
create new software.

The PI has already drafted a survey for students about
their perceptions of blended classes. A co-investigator
plans to teach two sections of the same course next
semester, one blended and one traditional, and will
generate data on student outcomes. The investigators will
also create a survey to evaluate faculty concerns and level
of comfort with blended learning and its implementation.
The goal is to work as collaboratively as possible with
faculty within and outside the Communications Department
and the larger CSUF community, bringing in outside experts
as appropriate. We strongly believe that new teaching
models are best developed by multiple stakeholders, and we
plan to draw on the extensive resources across campus to
provide faculty and students the best experience possible.

Q16. If your project plans to make use of already established, open-licensed technology projects or platforms, please list the relevant project(s) here, along with the project's primary Web site and an authoritative URL at which NGLC staff can review the project's licensing information.

Project Name:

Main Project Website:

Project Licensing Info URL:

Project Name:

Main Project Website:

Project Licensing Info URL:

Project Name:

Main Project Website:

Project Licensing Info URL:

If you have additional projects to list, please upload a Word or PDF document referencing your application and providing the requested information for each.

Attach: Select Files   (maximum size 1MB)

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